





Battleship Ringo

The last anyone heard of Murdoc Niccals, he was living on Plastic Beach, an island in the South Pacific formed entirely from rubbish.

All was well, until the day Murdoc's tropical ghetto was raided by pirates. (Not the eye-patch kind - those modern-day ones with machine guns and no sense of flair.) Murdoc decided that evacuation was the bravest option, and fled heroically in a rusty brown submarine.

With only a crate of Sailor Jerry's Rum for sustenance and Cyborg Noodle for company, Murdoc navigated his way through the slimy Octopuses Garden.

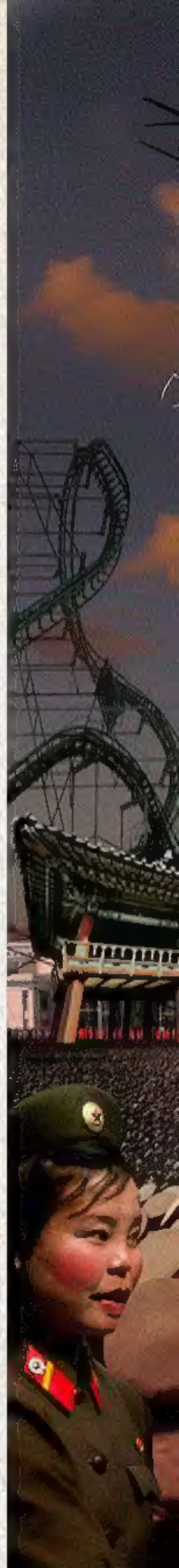


Cyborg Noodle proved the perfect shipmate for Murdoc: she didn't speak, she didn't judge, and she had absolutely no sense of smell.

Finally, when the booze ran out, Murdoc made to the surface and popped the hatch, releasing the rum-soaked air of the submersible like a kraken's guff. As he emptied his dangerously enlarged bladder, a giant shadow loomed over him. Two, if you count the ever-present memory of his disappointed father. But the other shadow was a ship: the Battleship Ringo, pride of EMI's fleet.

The record label had been searching the globe for Murdoc. At last, they had him. The Gorillaz star was captured, slapped about a bit, and taken to a secret prison in London.

'Dungeon Abbey', beneath Abbey Road Studios, was built to detain the label's ABCs (Artists in Breach of Contract). For three years it served as Murdoc's home, until one day, he was offered a deal by Entertainment Internal Affairs. Like an unloved goldfish, the music industry was going down the toilet, and in dire need of Murdoc's legendary song-writing prowess. In exchange for his release (and a carton of Lucky Lungs cigarettes), Murdoc agreed to write a new Gorillaz album, and moved immediately to a new studio home in West London.



大怪獣ガガサリ





I am not
Godzilla

Russel Hobbs had always put on weight easily, so when he grew sixty times in size swimming to Plastic Beach, he thought it might be his thyroid. Noodle, riding on his back the whole way, guessed it was more likely the six tons of polluted shrimp he'd swallowed en route.

Russel had found Murdoc, but like a circumcision ceremony their reunion was cruelly cut short. Pirates attacked from all sides, so Russell cradled Noodle inside his giant mouth and swam away.

Their trouble, however, was just beginning. Somewhere off the coast of Japan, Russel was mistaken for a whale and harpooned. He managed to wriggle free, but in the fracas Noodle was plucked from the blood-red water by the whalers.

Wounded and delirious, Russel struggled on through the ocean, feebly humming the power ballad All By Myself until he lost consciousness. Eventually, he drifted into the warm waters of the Yellow Sea, and washed up on a North Korean beach.

Giant Russel was carted to Pyongyang, where he was exhibited like a modern day Gulliver. The Great Leader Kim Jong Un declared that he'd captured Pulgasari, the legendary North Korean Godzilla. Russel became the country's biggest attraction, and 'I survived Pulgasari' t-shirts became the country's biggest selling fashion item. Or would have done if people were allowed to sell anything other than manure and tanks.

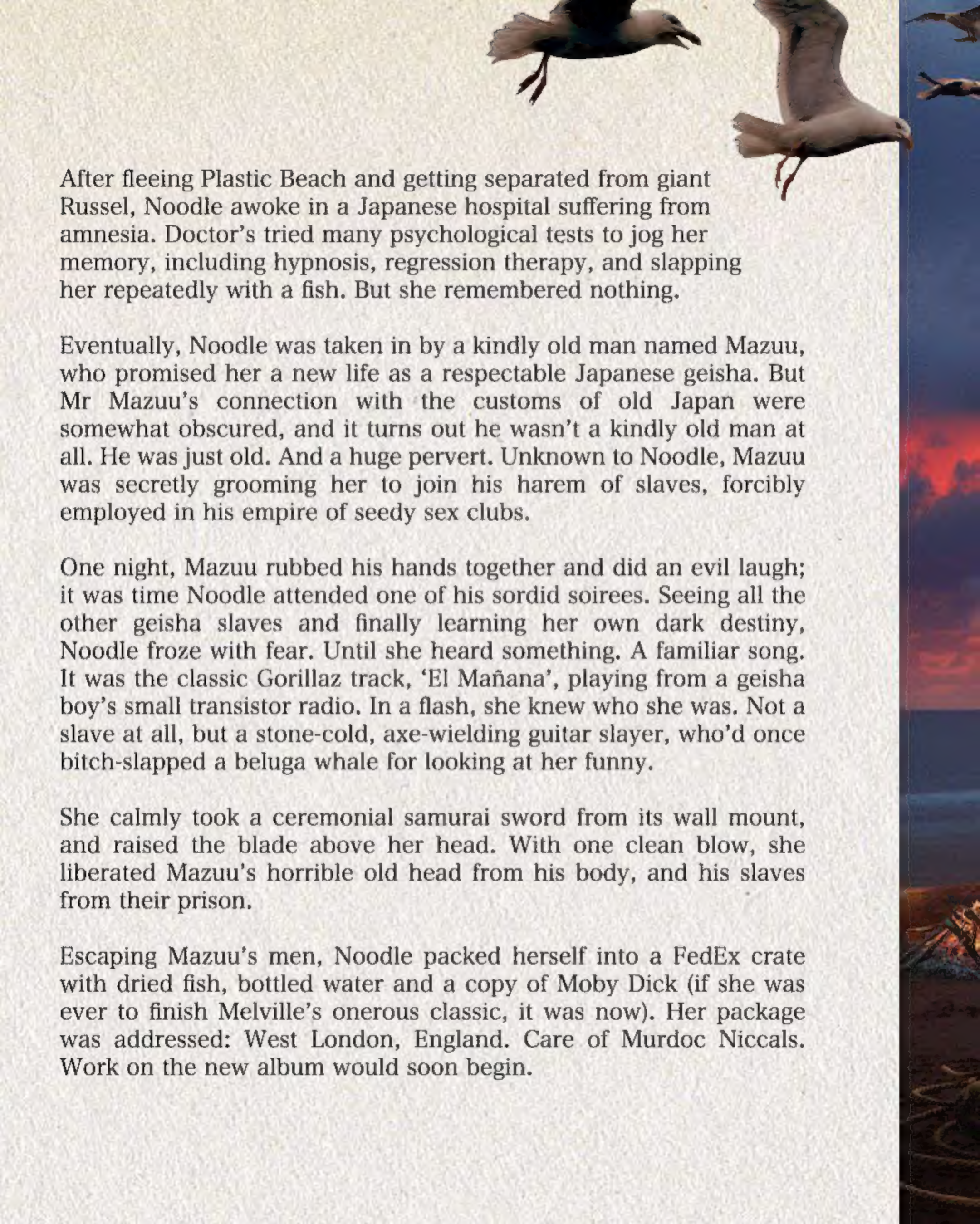
In time, the North's meagre food rations caused Russel to shrink back to normal size. Realising Russel was just a man, Kim Jong Un proclaimed that he'd personally defeated Pulgasari, and Russel was released. He was given a signed pressing of Kim Sings Sinatra, and sent back to England, where he wandered the streets of London, until musician and Gorillaz collaborator Jeff Wootton let him crash on his futon.

A few days later, Jeff's phone rang – it was Murdoc. A new Gorillaz album was in the making. Without delay, Russel moved into Murdoc's new West London home. The band was getting back together.





Farewell My Concubine



After fleeing Plastic Beach and getting separated from giant Russel, Noodle awoke in a Japanese hospital suffering from amnesia. Doctor's tried many psychological tests to jog her memory, including hypnosis, regression therapy, and slapping her repeatedly with a fish. But she remembered nothing.

Eventually, Noodle was taken in by a kindly old man named Mazuu, who promised her a new life as a respectable Japanese geisha. But Mr Mazuu's connection with the customs of old Japan were somewhat obscured, and it turns out he wasn't a kindly old man at all. He was just old. And a huge pervert. Unknown to Noodle, Mazuu was secretly grooming her to join his harem of slaves, forcibly employed in his empire of seedy sex clubs.

One night, Mazuu rubbed his hands together and did an evil laugh; it was time Noodle attended one of his sordid soirees. Seeing all the other geisha slaves and finally learning her own dark destiny, Noodle froze with fear. Until she heard something. A familiar song. It was the classic Gorillaz track, 'El Mañana', playing from a geisha boy's small transistor radio. In a flash, she knew who she was. Not a slave at all, but a stone-cold, axe-wielding guitar slayer, who'd once bitch-slapped a beluga whale for looking at her funny.

She calmly took a ceremonial samurai sword from its wall mount, and raised the blade above her head. With one clean blow, she liberated Mazuu's horrible old head from his body, and his slaves from their prison.

Escaping Mazuu's men, Noodle packed herself into a FedEx crate with dried fish, bottled water and a copy of Moby Dick (if she was ever to finish Melville's onerous classic, it was now). Her package was addressed: West London, England. Care of Murdoc Niccals. Work on the new album would soon begin.

ESTA NOCHE FIESTA A LA PLAYA





ESTA NOCHE FIES



Moaner and the Whale



During the pirate attack on Plastic Beach, 2D hid in his underwater quarters. Unwittingly, he'd made himself prey to a far fiercer foe: a great white whale known as Massive Dick (weirdly, no relation to Moby). The blubbery beast swallowed 2D in one bite, and swam into the deep.

But a lifetime spent eating ocean garbage – and now 2D – took its toll on Massive, and he died. His carcass washed up on a desert island, where 2D was finally free... to die of starvation, due to a total lack of survival skills. Unable even to catch crabs (which was more Murdoc's forte), 2D had no option but to eat his former host. Rancid whale blubber for breakfast, lunch and dinner. With a side order of sand.

Several months later, 2D spotted a plane flying along the coast. Moved to tears by this beacon of hope, he set off in its direction. Twenty-three minutes later he was in the middle of a full-scale beach rave. It turns out 2D wasn't marooned at all. He had in fact landed on Guadalupe, off the Mexican coast. 2D joined the beach party, ate some strange-tasting brownies, and came third in the wet T-shirt contest.

As he claimed his prize, 2D had a eureka moment. He would have a gap year and find himself. It turned out finding himself was really easy – he was right there. But he stayed the rest of the year anyway, until he got sacked from his job weaving friendship bracelets. It was time to fly home.

At Heathrow, a man at arrivals held up a sign saying 'Wanker'. 2D followed him to his car, which drove him to West London, where he was reunited with Murdoc, Russel and Noodle. Gorillaz were back.